

**ADVISORY COUNCIL ON  
AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES  
Meeting Minutes  
June 8, 2001  
Alaska Building, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Seattle, WA 98104**

**ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**Present:** Meryl Abramson, Martha Becker, Timmie Faghin, Lee Gaylor, Suzanne Gehring, Juanita Grant, Miriam Horrigan, Will Parry, Cecil Pollard, Gladys Romero, Mae Shields, Cherie Sigrist, Karen Sluiter, Helen Spencer, Greg Stack, Leo Ward, Suzanne Wiley, Fred Yee

**Absent:** Peter Steinbrueck

**Excused:** Marc Avni, Pat Carroll, Gabe Cohen, Thelma Coney, Cleo Corcoran, Murray Meld, Randy Hayhurst

**STAFF:** Margaret Casey, Peggy O'Brien-Murphy, Pam Piering, Allison Ruff, Suzanne Simmons, Karen Winston, Linda Wells, Linda Woodall

**GUESTS:** Shelley Lawson, Catharine Wu, Terra McCaffree, Judy Moulinet, Kathleen Southwick, Margaret Strachan, Sandy Stutey, Jane Tsang, Jing Tse

**Minutes**

*Juanita Grant*, Vice Chair, convened the meeting at 12:05 p.m. Minutes were approved as amended.

**Program**

**211:A National Initiative to Link People with Community Services**

(211 is a 3-digit dialing system for immediate access to health and human services)

*Linda Woodall* introduced the 211 panel: *Kathleen Southwick* from the Crisis Clinic, *Margaret Strachan* and *Terra McCaffree* from Senior Services. Margaret has served on the National Alliance of Information and Referral Systems Board for the past 4 years. This board has worked with a coalition of providers from around the country to establish a petition with the FCC requesting that 211 be set aside in communities for access to services. 211 started in the City of Atlanta in 1997 supported by United Way of America. The State of Connecticut followed Atlanta 1998. Then five other groups petitioned the FCC to set aside 211 nationally. In July 2000, the FCC set aside 211 exclusively for human services. Now the focus is on communities - to assess their needs, develop something that is responsive and then be able to funnel calls *directly* to where they need to go. We have a 5-year window to demonstrate to the FCC that 211 is working nationally. This means developing collaborative relationships in states *and* developing the detail of work on local levels (determine what exists and what is still needed) then creating a system that responds to each individual community. Thanks to Older Americans Act funding, the aging network in Washington

State already has a senior information and assistance system set up. In addition, the Washington State Mental Health Act requires that each community set up emergency telephone services for citizen use. As a result, most areas in our state have a 24-hour crisis line. We also have specialty lines for domestic violence and sexual assault. Unfortunately, up to now there has been no state funding for comprehensive information/assistance services in the health and human services. It's been up to the individual counties and cities to provide such funding. In our area we have funded a centralized community information line which is housed at the Crisis Clinic. Kathleen said last year, one-half of Crisis Clinic callers were looking for food, shelter, clothing, or utility and financial assistance. 97 % of all callers live below the poverty level. These callers were referred to approximately 3,000 human service agencies that offer about 8,000 different services. Without some sort of entry point for referral, these agencies and services become a quagmire for the average citizen who is seeking first-time assistance. Where do they go? How do they start? Needs vary greatly from utility, financial, transportation, medical, housing, childcare, and aging. Kathleen emphasized that a 211 system will be an enhancement to Senior I&A and the Crisis Clinic – not a replacement. Eventually, there will be a link between 911 and 211.

Terra is president of Northwest Alliance of Information and Referral Services, serving five different states: Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and parts of British Columbia. This group is working regionally to bring a broader perspective to 211 from broader communities. Display models exist in other states and are helpful in deciding what issues are important to our state. Fortunately, because we live in a very multicultural community we already have access to an international language bank with over 200 different languages. Within 30 seconds of identifying a language, the Crisis Clinic can have a professional interpreter on the phone.

Note: 511 is another number the FCC has been asked to set aside for development of a transportation network. DOT is taking the lead on the transportation program.

**Liaison Report:** *Suzanne Simmons* said King County is now looking at a \$36 million cut starting in 2002. She stressed that this is only an initial cut and there could be another \$20 million cut next year and each of the following five years. The Human Services proposed cut is \$5 million. Suzanne went over a list of some of the proposed cuts, then explained it's still possible that some of the cuts may be restored if the revised Aging Program Funding Policy is passed. (AP Program Funding Policy is in the midst of being revised and, in some cases, application of the revised policy may change how some programs are being reviewed.) Suzanne will let us know the specific cuts at the next meeting.

### Committee Reports

**Health Care Task Force:** *Karen Sluiter* The June meeting included a discussion on family care giving in King County and Hospice end-of-life issues. Terry Ward, spiritual director for Northwest Hospice gave a presentation on end-of-life issues. The troubling news is that funding from all levels is tightening and hospice will have to reduce the number of beds available for hospice patients. Karen said the ADS federal funding allocations for family caregiving services will be announced soon and that minutes from the Health Care Task Force will be sent to all AC members.

**Martha Becker** reported on a forum on Prescription Drugs - How Can We Balance Care, Cost, and Access? The forum covered several issues, including the rise of medical expenses and what's being done to control costs. 60 million Americans don't have insurance, one-third of seniors don't have prescription drug coverage, over one-half of seniors don't have coverage because they exceed their coverage cap. Last year drug costs increased 19% and are expected to increase over 38% by 2010. An attorney for the Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare presented an overview of the various insurance proposals in the pipeline and the inherent problems with them. An Editor of the Seattle Times Editorial Page spoke about the conflict between two goods - research vs. lower health care costs. He also posed the query, "Will the pharmaceutical industry become the next tobacco industry?"

Martha warned that we need to keep alert to the issues and continue writing our legislators. She also recommended a Consumer Reports article titled "The Stalling Game", relating how sweetheart deals and patent extensions keep lower costs from consumers' reach. **Leo Ward** questioned if the high cost of drugs keeps the medication out of the hands of the consumers who need them, then what's the value of high cost research?

**Housing Task Force Report:** **Greg Stack** and **Meryl Abramson**: Their last meeting was a well-attended follow-up to the Universal Design (UD) Brown Bag Workshop held in May in the City Council Chambers. The next action steps and big picture goals are: 1) setting up a demonstration project to show the cost of UD; 2) developing something similar to a LEED sustainable rating system for UD. Greg said a researcher has already expressed interest in developing this system; 3) developing a continuing education program. Recognizing that education awareness is essential, Greg and 3 other task force members are forming a subcommittee to develop a power point presentation as a traveling program on Universal Design. The goal is to get word out to a variety of individuals and groups that have an influence on housing, including the City's Department of Construction and Land Use (DCLU), University of Washington Architectural Department, American Institute of Architects (AIA) and other developer organizations. The subcommittee will take the exhibit (pamphlets and displays) to DCLU and the King County Building Department for the purpose of having information available for homeowners who come in and want ideas on how to make homes adaptable to various needs. **Cecil Pollard** suggested that people who include Universal Design concepts in the design of their homes should receive some kind of tax credit/benefit as an incentive. **Margaret Casey** said **Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck** is interested in this direction but wants a solid base of stakeholders developed first. The task force is already working on bringing a group of interested organizations together as stakeholders to present issues and a resolution to City Council. Karen Sluiter suggested we also get other municipalities to join us in supporting Universal Design concepts.

UD is being added to the Area Plan this year and the Council was delighted to hear that **Allison Ruff** has been hired as an intern and has been assigned to UD issues.

**Outreach & Advocacy Report:** **Will Parry** gave the report filling in for Gabe Cohen. AC Web Site. At some point there will be a training for all Advisory Council members on our web site. Focus is to make the AC site easily accessible and useful to the average person. **Helen Spencer** suggested we develop an information card on how to access our site and distribute it to locations frequented by seniors.

Budget Cuts: Will mentioned a Richard Dorsett communication regarding a \$3.6 million savings in another part of the long term care state budget and the immediate need to request that the money be

applied to the case manager ratio. The O&A Committee recommends the Advisory Council take quick action on the Richard Dorsett request and call or e-mail legislators, urging them to keep the caseload ratio at 85:1.

County: The committee is concerned that the \$ 5 million King County budget cut is symptomatic of a larger federal, state, county budget problem. We need a deeper look at fiscal problems – i.e. the tax system, and the heavy expenditures of the criminal justice system (60% of the County budget goes to criminal justice). Shift focus from incarceration to rehabilitation, amend “3-strikes and your out” laws, return discretion to judges, and examine the disparity of arrests and sentencing based on age and ethnicity. Institutional care is always a more costly service, yet we know spending money on human services saves money down the road. Will said that legislators haven’t grasped the concept of producing savings. They work in 2-year budget sessions and 2-year terms, making it difficult to focus on the long-term concept that prevention saves money. The North Shore Senior Center Wellness Program is a working example of how preventive measures save money in terms of public expenditures. We need to make legislature aware of this and other examples.

Transportation and Nutrition: The committee also discussed problems with Access not being adequately responsive to the needs of the users and suggests a special program on Access at a future meeting. Another concern was the funding levels of congregate meals and Meals on Wheels. Gladys Romero will do some research to help the committee decide if and how to approach the issue.

While Native Americans and their needs will be a part of the area plan, the Outreach and Advocacy Committee would like to see some future program focused on this issue.

**Planning & Allocation Committee** *Miriam Horrigan* The Area Plan is done every 4 years and is reviewed every 2 years for additions, changes and adjustments. We are now in the middle of our 2-year review. Miriam passed out a draft of the proposed changes (some timelines have been changed and Native American elders issue has been added). In making decisions on discretionary funds, the Planning and Allocation Committee wanted to see a performance evaluation on how effective the allocations have been and what difference the funds have made. Technology improvements have helped by allowing a wider range of data collection possibilities. Miriam passed out an ADS Draft Area Plan Report Card, which serves as a December 2000 data baseline. We can compare this baseline with the next 2-3 years to see how we’re doing. The Sponsors will review the draft for changes, public comment follows, then it returns to the P&A committee for a final recommendation to Sponsors and public approval. Any questions should go to Karen or Pam.

### **Directors Report.**

***Pam Piering*** invited the AC to attend the *MAAFA Suite*, a powerful spiritual and musical event in July by a church group from NY. It’s about the middle passage of traveling from freedom to slavery through centuries of discrimination and abuse. A compelling, forceful message is poignantly conveyed through music and dancing, offering the opportunity for deeper awareness of institutional racism. Please call Karen Winston or Peggy O’Brien-Murphy for tickets.

### **Director's Report**

(Pam Piering invited the AC to attend the MAATA Suite, July 13 or 14, a spiritual and musical drama commemorating the period in world history identified as the middle passage or Transatlantic Slave

Trade. MAAFA is a Kiswahili word used to describe real calamity, tragedy, or disaster. This powerful drama is the beginning of a healing and educational process regarding an overlooked chapter of history that has affected people of all races and cultures, and a means of furthering our awareness of undoing institutional racism. Please call Karen Winston or Peggy O'Brien-Murphy for tickets.)

State Caregiver Programs – In response to Will's request for information at an earlier meeting, Margaret handed out examples of 3 different provider services: Crisis Clinic, Kin-On and KC Housing Authority. These examples explain in more detail how the programs have worked and answer his questions of who has benefited in getting family caregiver money, and how have they benefited.

**Announcements:**

Surprise announcement – Jaime Garcia (our United Way Sponsor) has accepted a job as senior project manager for the NW for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 2:04 PM

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: July 13, 2001, Noon–2:00 PM  
Alaska Building, 13<sup>th</sup> Fl. Conference Forum  
618 Second Ave.  
Seattle, WA 98104

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Meryl Abramson, Secretary-Treasurer

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